

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the substance of allowable claim 7, and claim 7 has been withdrawn.

New independent claims 8 and 9 have been introduced.

Dependent claims 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been withdrawn and reintroduced, respectively, as new claims 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

As now amended, independent claim 1 along with its dependent claims 1/10, 1/11 and 1/12 are believed to be allowable.

New claim 8 is limited, *inter alia*, to converging flange sections leading from one end of the slot 40 to an intermediate location along the length thereof. Support for this limitation is provided in the specification at page 5, lines 11-13.

The term "converging" is defined as "to tend toward one point." (see the attached definition from Webster's Third New International Dictionary). The shoe lace fastener disclosed in Munsell plainly lacks the claimed converging flange sections of claim 8, or anything that could reasonably be considered as equivalent to such sections. The examiner has pointed to surfaces 40,32 and 38,32, but these merely define different diameters in a stepped cylindrical passageway. Nothing here converges.

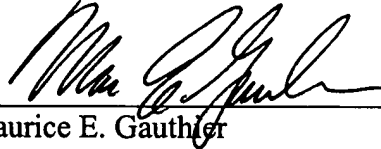
Accordingly, new claim 8 and its dependent claims 8/11, 8/12, 8/13, 8/14 and 8/15 should be allowed.

New claim 9 is limited, *inter alia*, to downwardly sloping jamming surfaces configured to frictionally retain the end tab of the web in the receiving channel of the buckle. Support for this limitation is provided in the specification at page 5, lines 13-15. Contrary to the position taken by the examiner, there is absolutely no showing of such surfaces in Figure 2, or for that matter,

anywhere else, in Munsell. Claim 9 and its dependant claims 9/13, 9/14 and 9/15 should therefore be allowed.

The remaining references cited but not applied by the examiner are not considered to anticipate or render obvious the claims presented above.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maurice E. Gauthier", is written over a horizontal line.

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